

Eco-Art Residency

at

Robinson Nature Center

The mission of the James and Anne Robinson Nature Center is to facilitate the enjoyment and understanding of our natural resources and to bridge the gap between people and nature. By inspiring sound environmental awareness, we promote responsible stewardship of all our natural resources and strive to connect people of all ages with nature through experience-based education. To this end, Robinson Nature Center will pilot an eco-art residency beginning September 2017. The goal of the residency is to encourage sustainable-thinking and actions through artistic expression that raises awareness, encourages action and/or addresses an area of ecological concern at Robinson Nature Center.

Identified ecological sustainability issue areas at Robinson Nature Center:

Invasive plants – reduction of ecosystem function and biodiversity

Excessive erosion – especially from trails and along stream banks

White-tail deer over abundance – loss of plant diversity and ecosystem function imbalance

Stewardship of diverse and quality wildlife habitat – increasing native plant diversity and availability of wildlife habitat

What we can offer a resident artist:

Stipend: \$1,000 financial support will be awarded to our chosen resident artist (or group).

Space: Robinson Nature Center maintains 18 acres of parkland – mostly forested, but with a stream, access to the Middle Patuxent River and minimal field and garden space. We also have some indoor storage and shared workshop space. Additionally, we have a small indoor art gallery (wall space), which would be available to the artist for displaying art work, if appropriate for the space.

Education/Expertise: Robinson boasts a staff of environmental educators and managers with advanced degrees and years of field experience. We are a collaborative staff willing to share our knowledge and passionate about nature, the environment and sustainability. Robinson also has connections to local scientists and managers with expertise in additional issue areas with which our staff is less knowledgeable.

Support: Both our staff and dedicated volunteer base is available to support in planning and implementation of a project set forth by a resident artist.

Enjoyment: We are also a fun-loving community! We enjoy sharing treats (in our staff lunch room often full of laughter), listening to bird songs, and taking long walks in the woods.

What we are looking for:

This residency will last one year, beginning in September 2017. We are looking for a resident artist (or group) to plan and execute a creative project addressing an area of ecological concern at Robinson Nature Center. We are interested in projects that:

- are inclusive, either working with volunteers or engaging the public;
- provide some sort of solution (or attempt at a solution) to an ecological problem;
- Or, raise awareness about the issue and possible solutions.
- At least one public outreach event or public program.
- While outcomes are open-ended, they should include either permanent works that add value to an area at Robinson Nature Center, or they may be ephemeral works, naturally decomposing.

Robinson Eco-Art Residency Application

Please use the following format to submit proposals.

Proposals should be submitted by email to Marisa Olszewski, molszewski@howardcountymd.gov or mailed to Robinson Nature Center, 6692 Cedar Lane, Columbia, MD, 21044:

1. Please attach a current résumé.
2. Artist statement/ Biographical information: please tell us briefly about yourself and what attracts you to the residency at Robinson Nature Center.
3. Proposed project summary: Please provide brief (no more than 150 word) summaries of up to three proposed projects to fit the residency.
4. Support and resources: What support and/or resources do you anticipate you would need from Robinson Nature Center to complete your proposed project(s)?
5. Past portfolio: please provide examples of your past work, up to five items.

In addition to this application, if accepted, you must be willing to undergo a criminal history background check, including finger-printing. You must also sign a liability waiver in accordance with Howard County Recreation and Parks volunteer policy.

Applications are due by Tuesday, August 15.

Attend an information session!

Meet Robinson Nature Center staff and get a tour of our facility and grounds during our information session for the Eco-Art Residency: **Saturday, July 15, 9 AM and 3 PM.**